

I'M FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND I'M HERE TO HELP: HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE IN WEST AFRICA

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Strategic Studies

by

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ABSTRACT

I'M FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND I'M HERE TO HELP: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN WEST AFRICA, by Major Marcus W. Johnson, 77 pages.

The U.S. military's AFRICOM Combatant Command (COCOM) has a mission to strengthen democratic institutions, spur economic growth, trade, and investment, advance peace and security, and promote opportunity and development throughout Africa. In order to accomplish these objectives in the West Africa region, AFRICOM has selected to employ a strategy that focuses on Security Force Assistance programs and military exercises. While regional security is extremely important to stability, it is ultimately an enabler of other types of operations that are designed to increase the prosperity of the people of the region and strengthen diplomatic, economic, and military ties between the U.S. and states in the West Africa region. This thesis explores the potential for AFRICOM to adopt a new strategy with additional emphasis on the U.S. military working with other organizations provide humanitarian assistance and drive social change in the region, the existence of R2P situations, the ethics and morality of responding to them, and the strategy's validity and effectiveness compared to the current plan.

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ACRONYMS

AAR	After Action Review
AFRICOM	U.S. African Command
AU	African Union
CDVR	Commission of Dialogue, Truth, and Reconciliation
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CNE	National Commission of Inquiry
COCOM	Combatant Command
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization
JP	Joint Publication
LOE	Line of Effort
MOE	Measure of Effectiveness
MOP	Measure of Performance
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
ROMO	Range of Military Operations

SFA	Security Force Assistance
SGI	Security Governance Initiative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It's all very well for us to sit here in the west with our high incomes and cushy lives, and say it's immoral to violate the sovereignty of another state. But if the effect of that is to bring people in that country economic and political freedom, to raise their standard of living, to increase their life expectancy, then don't rule it out.

— Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest*

Overview

No reasonable person desires the suffering of other living things. Not only are people generally not indifferent to others' problems, they actively seek to improve the station of those less fortunate than themselves. This is the reason that charities exist, and why there are soup kitchens, candy stripers, and canned food drives at elementary schools. Helping other people does not have to be entirely altruistically motivated, however. Humanitarian assistance is an action that the United States has taken around the world, but the level of assistance and the methods the U.S. uses to conduct its operations vary depending on various criteria, both selfish and selfless. United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM, hereafter referred to as AFRICOM) currently engages in humanitarian relief efforts in West Africa, but is it enough? What criteria does the U.S. use to determine the level of aid to administer to suffering areas in the region? U.S. strategy does not adequately address social inequality, poverty, literacy, or other social problems affecting the region. Should America more directly address these issues in West Africa? This thesis will attempt to provide a framework for understanding the issues and propose an answer to these questions.

Primary Research Question

Despite being mostly employed with a non-adversarial mindset, humanitarian assistance is unquestionably a concern that can involve the military, and the U.S. military acts within the confines of the National Security Strategy to advance U.S. national interests. This means that the military conducting humanitarian operations has the potential to achieve national strategic objectives, and West Africa could be a prime place to do just that. To address this issue, the primary research question is “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region?” AFRICOM currently administers twelve security cooperation programs. Humanitarian aid falls under security cooperation in the range of military operations (ROMO). Four of these programs fit the definition of humanitarian assistance given by this thesis. All four are medical in nature, with one being for animals and two targeting prevention and treatment of specific diseases. Despite the explicit guidance from the 2015 *National Security Strategy*, a document signed by the President of the U.S., engagement in Africa remains focused on security initiatives instead of “doubl(ing) access to power” (White House Staff 2015, 27); and military deployment capacity instead of “advanc(ing) human rights and eliminat(ing) corruption” (Joint Staff 2015, 27). The NSS recognizes the benefit of addressing social issues and humanitarian aid, but does not place enough emphasis on it to elicit a corresponding change in AFRICOM operations the 18 months since its publication. AFRICOM leaders have inarguably committed resources to the betterment of West African lives, but it has not formalized any programs, which would create a

standard for such commitments to meet and exceed. This primary research question will address the efficacy of the current model, and what U.S. leadership should do if it proves lacking. To support the answer to this question, secondary questions exploring other aspects of the topic must be answered.

Secondary Research Questions

These secondary research questions address the legitimacy and morality of a military strategy of humanitarian aid and eliciting social change in West Africa. The will also examine the strategy using the ends, ways, means, risk construct and test its validity through the suitability, feasibility, acceptability model.

The secondary questions answered in this thesis are:

1. Are there any situations that warrant a responsibility to protect (R2P) the people in of West Africa?
2. Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?
3. Is a US strategy of providing humanitarian assistance and promoting social change in the region valid?
4. Can the US effectively provide meaningful assistance to West African groups in need of it?
5. How effective will maintaining the current model be in achieving national strategic objectives compared to humanitarian assistance and social change?

States have a mandate to protect their citizens. The 1648 Treaty of Westphalia established a state's right to self-governance. This allows for the raising, equipping, and training of armies, establishment of international markets, and punishment of criminals,

but it also comes with a responsibility to protect the citizens within the state. This responsibility is codified in chapter VII of the United Nation's (UN) charter and based on a 2005 report from the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The UN describes any situation where the government is "manifestly fail(ing) to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity" (UN General Assembly 2005, 30) as an instance in which the international community should intervene. The first secondary question addresses whether or not situations in the region should fall into this category.

The people of the U.S. pride themselves on their general goodness. Their diversity, acceptance, and willingness to help others is a testament to America's moral uprightness and adherence to the golden rule, despite the lack of need for the reciprocation inherent in the latter clause of the golden rule. This is the view that Americans and many others around the world share about the U.S., and for these reasons, one may argue that humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa is a U.S. moral obligation. While the U.S. is definitely a force for good, it does not project its power with altruism as the sole determinant. Politicians must decide what level of commitment to apply to situations, if any, and Americans have not only just left a 15-year foreign entanglement, but have a history of inattention to, and subsequent forgetfulness of tragedies outside of their own borders. With this in mind, the second secondary question examines modern the American peoples' willingness to use their instruments of national power to influence the situations in West Africa.

The third secondary question explores the strategic relevance of West Africa, and the validity of employing a strategy of humanitarian aid and fomenting social change.

Because AFRICOM exists, one can assume that the strategic value of the continent is enough to award it its own combatant command. Because five of the nine AFRICOM-led exercises involve several if not mostly West African countries, and because six of the twelve African countries represented in the National Guard State Partnership Program are in West Africa (AFRICOM 2017b), inductive reasoning would assert that military leaders have identified West Africa as a very important region of the continent. This question is important because in addition to setting the example for morality in the world, the U.S. will always take action to advance its national strategic objectives. For the military, this means redistributing resources in terms of funding, equipment, and personnel. Large logistical and ideological shifts like this must not be made lightly, and any proposed strategy must meet certain criteria to be considered valid.

Should AFRICOM decide to place more emphasis on humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa, the COCOM (Combatant Command) must be prepared to execute those missions. As the fourth secondary question asks, however, how will U.S. carry out those missions effectively? Is AFRICOM staffed with the subject matter experts that can intelligently guide the required operations in the region? Theater strategists must analyze the requirements that their personnel and interorganizational partners must fulfill in order to have the most impact on the highest number of people. This would involve myriad mission sets with objectives that have measures of performance and effectiveness that are difficult to quantify, especially when dealing with change on a social level. Pushing changes in social attitudes anywhere is difficult, and the communities in West Africa are no different. Health organizations have championed against female genital mutilation for decades in West Africa, but as of 2015, 97 percent of females in Guinea

were victims of this practice, 90 percent in Sierra Leone (UNICEF 2016). If AFRICOM pursues a strategic objective of driving social change in West Africa, it must confront these and other issues that arguably kept African states from feeling comfortable hosting AFRICOM basing when it was formed in 2007, causing it to keep its headquarters in Germany.

The last secondary question deals with the current state of operations in West Africa and their effectiveness in terms of achieving national strategic objectives. AFRICOM's mission is to "build defense capabilities, respond to crisis, and deter and defeats transnational threats" (AFRICOM 2017c). Using the training operations it conducts and the partnership programs in which it engages as a gauge, this question will explore the degree to which AFRICOM's current focus on defense capabilities and transnational threats can expand U.S. strategic options for America's next fight. This question is important because it presents a course of action for comparison against the possibility of emphasizing that third aspect of AFRICOM's mission, "respond(ing) to crisis" with aid and provocation of social change to avoid those crises in the future.

Assumptions

There are countless variables that can affect the success of any given strategy. In the effort to assess the legitimacy of a U.S. strategy focusing on humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa, assumptions can minimize those variables to a manageable level. These assumptions must be generally true in order to conduct an accurate analysis. This thesis makes the assumption that extrapolation of the successes and failures of other U.S. led humanitarian assistance and social change efforts to the past and potential future situations in West Africa is tenuous at best. The countries in the

region each have their own culture, language, and social mores that would react differently to the types of influence a foreign state would introduce to them. This assumption also makes comparison to others a limitation of the research.

The second assumption this work makes is that the U.S. military can legitimately accomplish humanitarian assistance operations in the absence of neutrality required by the U.N. definition of humanitarian assistance. As will be discussed in the terms and definitions portion of this chapter, the U.N.'s definition of humanitarian assistance requires adherence to three principles, one of which is neutrality, which the U.S. military clearly does not have. Despite this issue, the U.S. can and does provide humanitarian assistance around the world quickly and efficiently, even contributing to aid in North Korea until early 2009 (U.S. Department of State BEAP 2016). This demonstrates that while the U.S. will seek to advance its interests in the application of humanitarian aid, it does not discriminate against suffering civilians on the basis of their location during a conflict.

The third assumption this thesis makes is that the U.S. will always only provide humanitarian assistance when the country experiencing a crisis and any non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in providing assistance do not have the capacity to provide assistance to the civilians within the country's population. This assumption is important because a U.S. policy of administering capital or supplies to a country that may be struggling but is not in a crisis does not fall within the boundaries of humanitarian assistance, but a different type of influencing operation more in line with security cooperation. These instances will not be covered by this thesis, except when comparing alternate strategies to increased emphasis on humanitarian assistance.

The last assumption this thesis will make is that ethical considerations, when determining the validity of a humanitarian assistance situation, has driven and will continue to drive international lawmaking. These laws, in turn, drive policy development which affects the variables that military strategists will use to justify their proposed courses of action. This means that unless otherwise specified, there is no conflict between the ethical, political, and legal aspects of a humanitarian assistance strategy. In other words, if the strategy is ethical, it is also in line with established policies and is legal.

Definitions and Terms

Some of these important terms used in this thesis have significant variation in connotation depending on the author or agency using them. To facilitate a shared understanding of the content within, there are several terms that require definition.

Humanitarian Assistance: The Global Humanitarian Assistance program defines this type of assistance as aid that seeks to save lives, alleviate suffering, and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters (Global Humanitarian Assistance 2016). Humanitarian assistance typically respects the three guiding principles set forth by the UN: Humanity (the aforementioned saving of lives and alleviating suffering); impartiality (providing assistance to those in need regardless of their citizenship or combatant status); and neutrality (showing no favor, providing no intelligence, and promoting no agenda for any side in a conflict) (UN General Assembly 1991, 1). While the military is committed to working with the non-governmental organizations that follow all of these tenets, the fact that the military is a branch of the U.S. government prevents adherence to the principle of neutrality.

Therefore, when using the term in this paper, humanitarian assistance will include

neutrality when referencing NGOs, and will not include neutrality when referencing government agencies engaging in humanitarian assistance activities. Two important aspects of this definition set it apart from humanitarian intervention: the requirement of respect for a state's sovereignty, which ensures the willing acceptance of aid from an outside source, and the use of prevention measures to preempt crises.

Humanitarian Intervention: coercive action by States involving the use of armed force in another State without the consent of its government, with or without authorization from the UN Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to a halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law (World Health Organization 2003, 14). Differentiated from humanitarian assistance by the militarized aspect and willingness to override state sovereignty.

Responsibility to Protect: sometimes abbreviated as R2P, this concept details the responsibility every state has to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, to include prevention and early warning (UN General Assembly 2005, 30). The UN views failure to meet this responsibility as justification for humanitarian intervention. It is important to note that the decision to claim that there exists a situation that meets the criteria of R2P in a certain state is withheld at the national level. The policy is designed to provoke thoughtful discussion, critical thinking, and well-informed judgment that suits a congregation of world leaders representing their states. The policy is not designed to allow any individual the freedom to engage in vigilantism if they decide that a given situation presents them with a responsibility to protect someone or something.

Social Change: the alteration of mechanisms within the social structure, characterized by changes in cultural symbols, rules of behavior, social organizations, or value systems (Encyclopedia Britannica 2017). For the purposes of this thesis, social change will generally refer to a westernization of West African culture unless otherwise stated.

Strategy: Joint Publication (JP) 1 describes strategy as a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater and multinational objectives (Joint Staff 2013, I-7). *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* builds on this, showing that synchronization and integration should be accomplished through “the linkage of ways, ends, and means, while accounting for risk, to meet national objectives” (Kem 2012, 19). The strategy that this thesis is concerned with is military strategy, concerned with theater and above levels of planning and implementation in the West African region.

Limitations and Delimitations

There is an enormous amount of history on the topics of strategy, social change, and humanitarian assistance in West Africa. In order to provide a thorough analysis of relevant concepts, this thesis will employ certain limitations and delimitations. These tools allow the researcher to narrow the scope of the examination of the subject. Limitations inform what weaknesses exist within the thesis due to factors outside of the researcher’s control, while delimitations inform what information will and will not be covered.

West Africa is comprised of many countries, each with its own history, customs, and languages. This makes an accurate comparison to other countries, even within Africa,

a limitation. This thesis will discuss U.S. involvement in other humanitarian assistance missions and their degree of success, but a true comparison will be limited to U.S. actions, and cannot account for adversary and West African population reaction. This thesis also deals only with the modern conception of coordinated response to crises with humanitarian assistance. For this reason, information sources and historical examples will be limited to 1990 onwards, as policy on humanitarian intervention and prevention of atrocities came as a result of events from 1990 to 1994, which led to the Rwandan genocide. The material will primarily focus on West Africa, but will also address other instances of humanitarian aid and intervention that the U.S. has participated around the world within the given time period. As mentioned in the definition of humanitarian assistance, the military is far from being the only American group that responds to humanitarian crises in other states. While these agencies contribute immensely to positive efforts, this thesis will only address them as they contribute to the analysis of the presented military strategy.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the overview of the situation, the research questions that will inform the research, assumptions necessary to continue research, defined the key terms that will appear throughout the text, and delineated the areas of the subject to be examined. The next chapter, chapter 2, will outline the existing, relevant literature on the subject, and shows how they will address aspects of each of the secondary research questions, which, through evaluation criteria analysis, will answer the primary research question.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Introduction

The purpose of this research is to answer the primary research question: “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region?” In answering this question, research requires investigation into a variety of literary sources. The use of these sources requires a literary review, which will inform the reader of the body of work currently existing on the topic and the prevailing attitudes regarding it. This information will be organized thematically, highlighting each of the secondary research questions and outlining the purpose of the works and the position and potential bias of the works’ author when appropriate.

Responsibility to Protect

The most pressing need for humanitarian assistance in West Africa are situations in which a state in the region is failing to protect its citizens. The responsibility first falls to the state, then to the international community. The sources in this section address the definition of R2P, the ethical considerations when determining if a R2P situation exists, and whether or not there exists a situation in West Africa that would qualify for this thesis’ definition of R2P.

The UN provides the basis for the definition of R2P that this thesis uses in the *2005 World Summit Outcome* (UN General Assembly 2005, 30). The U.S. confirms this

basis in the 2015 *National Security Strategy* (NSS), where it pledges to support international community action against state governments failing to provide necessary protection (White House Staff 2015, 22). The important implication in the NSS is that the U.S. will not unilaterally act on behalf of a beleaguered people unless the international community agrees that it is necessary, which is why this thesis uses the UN definition. In response to then Secretary-General Kofi Annan's question about the ethics of violating a country's sovereignty in the light of the tragedies in Rwanda and Srebrenica, the Canadian government along with a group of major foundations established the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) in September of 2000. Their report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, published in December of 2001, both introduced and formed the basis of the 2005 UN definition of the concept while examining the legal, ethical, operational, and diplomatic considerations of R2P (ICISS 2001, 9-11). J. L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane take this a step farther in their book of collected essays titled *Humanitarian Intervention, Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas*, where they illuminate faults in both sides of the R2P debate from the three titular dimensions. They conclude that legal reasoning for R2P cannot be divorced from moral reasoning due to international political climates, and that the conditions necessary to drive typical people to take similar action for humanity in general as they would for their community are exceptional (Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003, 49-52). Alex J. Bellamy, in *Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse, the Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq*, compares the opposing and prevailing arguments toward the subject—that states either truly recognize they have a responsibility to protect their population, or that the intervention is a tool for the powerful states to legitimize

interference into the weak state's affairs (Bellamy 2005, 32-33). He concludes that the language of R2P is too vague, that it allows states to abdicate responsibility for their own people, and other states to deny the need to assume responsibility for those same people (Bellamy 2005, 53) Lastly, on the subject of current cases of R2P in West Africa, Jaclyn D. Streitfeld-Hall shows in *Preventing Mass Atrocities in West Africa* that there are several instances of R2P-qualifying situations ongoing in West Africa; however, all are either in the preventive or recovery phase, not the military reaction phase (Streitfeld-Hall 2015, 3). The UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has missions in four West African countries; all deal with either prevention of intervention or recovery from conflict, substantiating Streitfeld-Hall's claims.

U.S. Moral Obligation

Discussing morality in any context can be controversial. When dealing with the serious impact on human life and well-being that could accompany any given crisis in West Africa, "doing the right thing" becomes the all-important goal for anyone possessing the ability to empathize, but what is "the right thing?" Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, describes the way Army leaders could make their decision:

One perspective comes from the view that desirable virtues such as courage, justice, and benevolence define ethical outcomes. A second perspective comes from the set of agreed-upon values or rules, such as the Army Values or Constitutional rights. A third perspective bases the consequences of the decision on whatever produces the greatest good for the greatest number as most favorable. (Department of the Army 2012, 29)

An easier way to interpret this is Dr. Jack Kem's *Ethical Decision Making: Using the "Ethical Triangle,"* which classifies the three modes of thinking as principles-based,

consequences-based, and virtues-based (Kem 2016, 4). John Janzekovic, the author of *Use of Force in Humanitarian Intervention: Morality and Practicalities*, examines these aspects of morality in a crisis situation. Of note, he explains how intervention is justified based on principles-based and virtues-based ethics (Janzekovic 2013, 70). Didier Fassin takes a different and relatively new approach in his book *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*, in which he describes the uniquely specific concept of humanitarianism. This way of thinking “concerns . . . every situation characterized by precariousness” and encompasses “nongovernmental organizations, international agencies, states, and individuals.” This tailor-made morality fits the humanitarian assistance mission set perfectly. However, by the author’s own admission, is not ubiquitous by any means, saying “humanitarianism elicits the fantasy of a global moral community” (Fassin 2011, 12). This thesis will apply these multiple and disparate ways of thinking about morality to the current American political and social landscape, informed by governmental policy and public opinions of American moral obligation to the rest of the world.

Strategy Validity

JP 1, *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, provides the framework for understanding how national strategic direction is the starting point for developing a sound strategy (Joint Staff 2013, I-1-I-4). This guidance is presidential policy that military leaders must use as input when developing a strategy. In *On War*, Carl Von Clausewitz examines the link between policy and strategy, citing policy as the driving force behind the execution of the strategy, which must accomplish the goal of the policy (Clausewitz 1984, 80-81). This dynamic can easily fail, as both policy and strategy must

be sound. As discussed in the secondary research questions segment, this thesis references several governmentally developed documents to understand the strategic direction of the U.S. armed forces in relation to national policies. These documents include: the *National Security Strategy* (NSS—signed by the president) (White House Staff 2016, 19-22, 26), *National Defense Strategy* (NDS—developed by the OSD (Office of the Secretary of Defense)) (OSD 2012, 6), *National Military Strategy* (NMS—developed by the staff of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS)) (Joint Staff 2015, 5-6), and unclassified sources giving insight into AFRICOM’s theater strategy (Rodriguez 2016, 2-3), such as the AFRICOM website and the *United States Africa Command 2016 Posture Statement*. These documents will inform this thesis’ description of a strategy with more emphasis on humanitarian assistance and pushing for social change by examining the U.S.’s currently stated ends, ways, and means. Dr. Richard Yarger, in his essay titled *Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the U.S. Army War College Strategy Model*, explains the development of the model to proactively evaluate a strategy. This model, developed by Yarger’s colleague, Art Lykke, evaluates the strategy on the basis of its suitability (the strategy’s objective attainment must accomplish the desired effect), feasibility (the action that the strategy prescribes must be accomplished by the means available), and acceptability (the consequences of cost of the strategy must be justified by the importance of the desired effect) (Yarger 2012, 47-50). In order for a strategy to pass Lykke’s evaluation criteria of suitability, feasibility, and acceptability, the strategy must balance the ends, ways, and means developed by Yarger and Lykke, with the risk inherent within military action, a fourth pillar of strategy design explained by Kem in *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools* (Kem 2012,

27). There is currently no other widely recognized method for dealing with military strategy design and evaluation.

Effective Assistance

No person with a working knowledge of the U.S. military and its history would describe said military as “incapable” or “ineffective.” The storied organization has centuries of experience defeating its enemies, but how will it perform when tasked to perform a humanitarian assistance mission, where the enemy is endemic hunger? How will it perform when asked to influence a population to change something about itself to improve its collective social health and perceived international worth? This question logically follows the question of the strategy’s suitability, or the “will it work” question. In order to determine the level of effectiveness of the proposed strategy, the thesis will use methodology explained by Kem’s *Planning for Action: Campaign Concepts and Tools*. Specifically, the Measure of Performance (MOP) and Measure of Effectiveness (MOE) crosswalk will be useful to define success. Some Joint Publications have valuable information that provide a guide for how operations dealing with humanitarian assistance typically run, what resources are required, and what interorganizational support is typically used to support the efforts. Most useful in this regard are JP 3-07, *Stability Operations*, and its subset, JP 3-07.3, *Peace Operations*, and JP 3-29, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*. In addition to the examining the requirements AFRICOM must fulfill to ensure an effective strategy, looking at past accomplishments in Africa can provide information involving social and sustainment trends that could affect operations. In the collection of essays, *Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa and Beyond*, Tobias Burger describes them—“Larger logistical operations . . . used by the United States Armed

Forces, are far too complicated and beyond the current financial means of aid organizations” (Burger 2015, 83). This along with the *2016 Global Humanitarian Assistance Annual Report*, which quantifies the problems with emphasizing short term humanitarian assistance, raises two difficult issues. First, AFRICOM’s ability to commit to long term humanitarian assistance missions, considering the inability of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) to continue providing such assistance in AFRICOM’s absence. Second, AFRICOM’s ability to conduct the intensive interorganizational cooperation that would be required to meet strategic end states with a high degree of effectiveness.

For Better or Worse

The U.S., while wealthy, does not have unlimited resources. The way that the U.S. apportions its forces must be deliberate and calculated in order to gain the most benefit for the least cost, keeping in mind the benefit may not be tangible in the near term. In present-day 2016, the U.S. has decided that the best way to use their military forces in West Africa is overwhelmingly in favor of military engagement and security cooperation. The AFRICOM posture statement will detail the organization’s strategy for engagement in West Africa, while press releases about individual exercises will give insight into the effects of the engagements on the local population and government relationship with U.S. forces. Because the source of this information is AFRICOM, the entity under analysis and the information they release may be biased, potentially showing themselves as being more effective than they are. To counter this, analysis of other sources will be necessary. Two such sources that will provide valuable insight are Maya Kandel’s study—*U.S. Strategy in Africa*, which concludes that the U.S. is concentrating

too much on short term counter-terrorism effectiveness at the expense of pursuing the causes of the problem (Kandel 2015, 21-22), and James DeTemple's *U.S. Policy Toward Africa: Application of U.S. Africa Command Signals Africa's Increasing Strategic Importance*, arguing that the balance of operation types has "helped build the security capacity of African states and regional organizations, especially for regional peacekeeping, and humanitarian and disaster relief" (DeTemple 2014, 7).

Chapter Conclusion

The literature review examined the resources that will be providing information on each of the subjects that the secondary research questions seek to understand and answer. In the process of answering these questions in chapter 4, the analysis will ensure to take into account the potential sources of bias. The next chapter, chapter 3, will outline the research methodology that this thesis will employ, including the evaluation criteria that will assist in providing an answer to the primary research question.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter Introduction

In the effort to answer the primary research question “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region,” this thesis will employ a step-by-step approach. This approach begins with a review of the existing literature on the topic, followed by the analysis of the secondary research questions. Finally, the evaluation criteria will be applied to the secondary research questions, and the aggregated results will inform the answer to the primary research question.

Evaluation Criteria

There can be no objective answer to the primary research question posed by this thesis. The research within can only present an analysis of current conditions and historical trends that will be subject to individual interpretation. The objective of this work, however, is to eliminate as much subjectivity from the analysis as possible in the effort to make a compelling case for a certain course of action for U.S. national security strategy in West Africa. Pursuant to this goal, the researcher will develop evaluation criteria, which set forth predetermined answers to the secondary research questions and assigns point values to each answer (one, two, and three points). Once research and analysis of each secondary research question is complete, the answer to the question will

fit into one of the categories of the evaluation criteria, and the point totals will point toward the least subjective answer of the primary research question.

Although the primary research question asks a “yes-or-no” question, the answer cannot help but to be better qualified during its analysis with an answer to the implied question that goes along with asking if the U.S. should put greater emphasis on humanitarian assistance in the region; the qualification implied is “if yes, how much?” In order to provide further clarification on the amount of emphasis the U.S. should place on the stated strategy, the review of the scores of the secondary research question in aggregate must be designed to answer the stated primary research question and its implied corollary in terms of “no,” “yes, some more emphasis,” and “yes, much more emphasis.” Table 1 shows an example of how the thesis will present and weigh the evaluation criteria.

Table 1. Response Evaluation Criteria			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
1) Are there any situations that warrant a responsibility to protect (R2P) the people in of West Africa?			
2) Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?			
3) Is a US strategy of providing humanitarian assistance and promoting social change in the region valid?			
4) How can the US effectively provide meaningful assistance to West African groups in need of it?			
5) How effective will maintaining the current model be in achieving national strategic objectives compared to humanitarian assistance and social change?			

Source: Developed by author.

The evaluation criteria will assist in determining if the *U.S. National Security Strategy* should place a small amount of additional emphasis, a great amount of additional emphasis, or no additional emphasis on humanitarian assistance and social change programs in West Africa. The five evaluation criteria correspond directly to the secondary research questions. When analyzed individually and compared to the

requirements for giving them a point value, these evaluation criteria will provide a guide to establishing to what degree, if any, the *U.S. National Security Strategy* should emphasize humanitarian assistance and social change programs in West Africa. This guide is a result of the aggregated scores being totaled with the final score enumerating the answer to the primary research question. The highest score will be the preferred course of action, and this course of action will be discussed at the end of chapter four.

Research Methodology

This thesis will utilize the step-by-step method of approaching this research.

Step 1: The first step in the research process is the literature review. This review will provide the foundation for conducting research into the topic of U.S. humanitarian assistance in West Africa by examining the works of authors who have written on a variety of topics directly or tangentially related to the primary research question. The purpose of the literature review is not to answer any of the research questions, but to understand what factual information is available for analysis, to familiarize the researcher with the prevailing attitudes on the subject, and to organize the resources the researcher will use to conduct the analysis. The literature review will encompass chapter two of this thesis.

Steps 2-6: The next several steps involve the use of gathered resources to conduct a qualitative analysis of each of the secondary research questions the thesis set forth in chapter one:

1. Are there any situations that warrant a responsibility to protect (R2P) the people in of West Africa?

2. Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?
3. Is a US strategy of providing humanitarian assistance and promoting social change in the region valid?
4. How can the US effectively provide meaningful assistance to West African groups in need of it?
5. How effective will maintaining the current model be in achieving national strategic objectives compared to humanitarian assistance and social change?

Step 7: Once the analysis is complete, the last step is to apply the previously defined evaluation criteria to each of the secondary research questions individually. The researcher will then to aggregate these separate scores and total them. The resulting score will fall into one of three options, each a possible answer to the primary research question.

Threats to Validity

The research methodology of this thesis lends itself to multiple threats to its validity. These threats compromise the objectivity of the results and can potentially invalidate the conclusions one may draw from them. The goal for this research is provide an answer to the research question that reflects a thought process showing a logical examination of factors relevant to the topic, and ensuring that all threats to validity are mitigated to the greatest extent possible. The main threats to validity in this work are threats to criterion validity, external validity, and the Hawthorne effect (Garson 2016 23-31).

Criterion Validity: this concept deals with the objectivity of measuring variables, and how closely the results of one measure are related to the results of another. In this thesis, the main competition for emphasis on humanitarian assistance and social change is the existing emphasis on security cooperation and military engagement. Many of these programs may have similar effects, such as growing political ties between the U.S. and the various West African states. The research must show that a change in emphasis will have a measurable effect that is better or worse than the current emphasis in order to be considered valid (Garson 2016, 23).

External Validity: this measure of validity has to do with induction, and showing that what is true for a portion of the population is true of the entire population. In conducting this research, this is a significant threat because West Africa is made up of over a dozen states, disparate in some ways and comparable in others. Even within those states, one will find radical changes in religion, language, education, westernization, and many other aspects of culture. When examining the possible courses of action in this region, it will become extremely important to take these differences into account, as humanitarian assistance and social change may be appropriate for one area, but security cooperation and military engagement may be more appropriate for another. In this area, the researcher must assume some risk as a complete analysis of differences between individual states and the existing internal differences within those states is beyond the scope of this work (Garson 2016, 31).

Hawthorne Effect: this threat to the validity of the research arises from the expectations of the researcher. These expectations have the ability to influence the results of the research toward a specific answer of the primary and secondary research question

toward confirming the researchers preconceived ideas about the validity of certain courses of action available to U.S. leadership. Pertaining to this thesis, the researcher has military experience in organizations that have participated in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations, and has seen the impact of such operations on future engagements between the U.S. and assisted countries. In order to avoid invalidating the research, this thesis must be deliberate in its analysis of the evidence pertaining to the advantages of both current and proposed U.S. strategy (Garson 2016, 27).

Chapter Conclusion

The research methodology explained throughout this chapter emphasizes a thorough qualitative analysis of existing factual data. The step-by-step process of conducting a review of the literature, answering each research question, scoring the results of the research question, and drawing conclusions from them can only be successful if the researcher takes a deliberate approach to combating the threats to validity and adheres to the self-imposed limitations and delimitations. If implemented correctly, the proposed research methodology will provide the least subjective answer to the primary research of “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region?” The next chapter, chapter 4, is data presentation and analysis, which will continue the stepwise approach process with step two, answering the first secondary research question.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

You can't have development without security, and you can't have security without development.

— Robert Gates, *2010 U.S. Global Leadership Coalition Panel*

Chapter Introduction

This chapter will present data that will be helpful in an analysis of the primary research question “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region?” Once the presentation of data is complete, the researcher will use the response evaluation criteria to answer the secondary research questions explicitly, and these answers will inform the answer to the primary research question in turn.

Step 1: Results of the Literature Review

The primary findings of the literature review support a strategy that incorporates humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa. The issues that cause suffering to the citizens of the regions' states are, in many cases, the same issues that are the root of the problem behind the security problems in those same states. These primary issues are unemployment, poor education, human rights abuses, and conflict-laden transfers of power. None of these issues currently require international intervention, as world leaders agree that at this time, the responsibility to protect the people of West Africa lies with their states' governments. This could change at any time, as these R2P situations are

either in the prevention phase or the recovery phase, and these situations have the potential to degrade quickly.

The literature review also illuminated the U.S. capability to support efforts focused on humanitarian assistance and social change. Successes in the Middle East and around the world, and lessons learned about how to provoke change in a nation, will guide military strategy going forward. In addition to operational expertise gained through responding to crises around the world, the military has organizational experience dealing with IGOs, NGOs, and other organizations within the U.S. government such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The logistical and interorganizational power the military can bring to bear for this cause is high, prohibitively high for any other organization to sustain should the military pursue this strategy and abort it before accomplishing its objectives.

Lastly, the literature review showed that the subjectivity of morality prevents any truly objective way to conclusively declare the benevolence of humanitarian assistance when a foreign government is involved. None dispute the goodness of the act itself, but intent and future expectations somewhat taint the original act. This is why it is important for the government to support the NGOs and not be the lead agency for this type of operation, as such an action would de-legitimize the assistance. Social change is also nebulous in terms of virtues-based ethics, as the virtues of the affected people must be considered before committing to a change in the social order.

Step 2: R2P Situations in West Africa

A country's sovereignty is extremely valuable. A government must have the trust of its people for it to function as a ruling body. Governments maintain that trust by

providing for and protecting their citizens. In a situation where disease, famine, violent extremism, natural disaster, or some other calamity threatens the population, a country's government must have the capacity to respond effectively to protect the citizens that support it. If that country lacks the critical infrastructure, economic power, or willing leadership to protect its people, then that responsibility transfers to the world community. This responsibility to protect, or R2P, that falls on the world community comes with the authority to interfere with another state's sovereign affairs, the bedrock upon which a state's ability to exercise control over its people rests. For this reason, it is a very important thing to carefully consider the situations facing states in West Africa, decide whether or not those states can adequately handle their own affairs, and whether or not it is appropriate for foreign states to intervene.

The decision to mobilize the international community toward collective action in a particular state or region is one that leaders must make deliberately. For that reason, every instance in which a state claims the need for international action requires a UN mandate. This not only legitimizes the action that the UN takes as the will of the world and for the benefit of the citizens of the affected state, but also prevents individual states from interfering with other states for political reasons under the pretense of R2P. In addition to requiring a UN mandate that represents the will of the world community, the implementation of R2P must pass a significantly high hurdle in terms of the qualifications a situation must meet in order to merit world mobilization.

An R2P situation will see negotiators, medical professionals, contractors, and if necessary, military personnel from around the world converging on the affected state in an effort to protect the populace from whatever threatens them. This threat must be clear,

and it must be life-threatening. In their 2005 World Summit Outcome, the UN described the threats that qualify for a consideration of implementation of R2P as “genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (UN General Assembly 2005, 30). The meeting of this standard of measure is certainly not commonplace, and instances of human rights violations on this scale are quick to become part of the public mindshare, whose demands further speed resolution of the issue.

Considering all of these factors, it is not surprising that there has not been a great deal of military mobilization to protect the people of a state on behalf of the UN. According to Edward Luck, the special advisor to the UN’s former Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on R2P, six years after its inception, “(The UN had) invoked the responsibility to protect . . . eight or nine times. Only in one of those cases, with Libya, was it tied to the use of sanctions or military force” (UNRIC for Western Europe 2011, 2). The crisis in Libya remains one of only two times that the UN has used R2P in conjunction with non-diplomatic actions—this speaks to its rarity of actual execution by UN forces.

The West African state of Cote d’Ivoire is an appropriate example of the proper use of invoking the R2P mandate with intent to use military might. It is the site of the second and most recent application of force in the UN’s history. In November 2011, what should have been a peaceful transfer of power between incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo and newly elected President Alassane Ouattara turned violent when president Gbagbo refused to relinquish control. The ethnically aligned backers of each party began the process of attacking civilian communities consisting of the ethnic identity of the opposing party. Political entities endeavored to end the situation peacefully through many

measures. The UN declared Ouattara the victor of the election, as did ECOWAS (the Economic Community of West African States) and the AU (African Union). ECOWAS and AU both suspended Cote d'Ivoire's membership from their organizations. ECOWAS, the U.S., and the EU froze the assets of the most prominent members and supporters of President Gbagbo. ECOWAS and the AU sent mediation teams to Cote d'Ivoire seven separate times (Streitfeld-Hall 2015, 13). Nothing was working, and regional stability was at risk as surrounding countries' resolve to remove Gbagbo waned. Finally, the UN invoked R2P, authorizing United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to "use all necessary means to carry out its mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence . . . including to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population" (UN Security Council 2011, 3). After eight months, there were 3,000 dead Ivoirians, 100,000 refugees, and almost one million internally displaced persons (IDPs). If the UN had not declared their responsibility to protect the citizens of Cote d'Ivoire, those totals could have been much higher.

The very large difference between coercive and non-coercive intervention is due in large part to another portion of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document dealing with the prevention of R2P. With regard to the crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, this section sets forth the certain duties of a sovereign state, including a "responsibility entail(ing) the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means" (UN General Assembly 2005, 30). In addition to the response with military action, this prevention method is also evident in the aftermath of the calamitous 2010 presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire.

After the violence stemming from the presidential conflict subsided in June of 2011, the government of Cote d'Ivoire formed the CNE (National Commission of Inquiry) and the CDVR (Commission of Dialogue, Truth, and Reconciliation) to investigate the underlying causes of the conflict and determine to what level of accountability each actor in the event should be held. The citizens of the state criticized these groups, saying that they held a largely one-sided view of the investigated aspects of the conflict in favor of the current administration. This was due to Gbagbo's party refusing to take part in the group's effort, and Ouattara's administration not being able to fund the group. The people's lack of confidence and government's inability to commit to the effort showed the government's inability to exercise its responsibility to prevent a future tragedy. With a future problem to prevent, the groups that were created to address CNE and CDVR's findings requested help from external sources. The OHCHR (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) and UNOCI held forums in which civil society groups and government ministry representatives could open a dialogue on how to proceed with reintegration and reconciliation. The UN also assisted the government in conducting fair and inclusive elections, training for police in ethics and child- and gender-based violence, training for security forces in civilian protection, and support to the government for human rights monitoring and defense (Streitfeld-Hall 2015, 15-16). This bevy of support strengthened the rule of law in the country and helped in preventing a resurgence of violence in Cote d'Ivoire by narrowing the deep divide present in the populace.

Unfortunately, these problems are not a thing of the past. In the spring of 2015, a special court convicted Simone Gbagbo, the wife of Laurent Gbagbo, for her role in the

election violence along with 82 other allies. This action served to further the ethnic and political divide within the country, and while the Ouattara's Fall 2015 re-election was relatively peaceful, violent attacks persisted, with reintegration resisting "Dozos" continuing to perpetrate ethnically-driven attacks (WANEP 2015, 9). These attacks, along with terrorist attacks in the region, contribute to instability and speak to the need for an outside body to assist Cote d'Ivoire in preventing another catastrophic event.

Conditions similar to the one in Cote d'Ivoire exist in Mali, where the Malian army led a coup against their widely-corrupted government in 2012. This was a result of the army receiving minimal support in their fight against the alienated Tuareg people, whose perceived ethnic discrimination had prevented them from having a place in policymaking. In the disarray of the coup, the Tuaregs allied with Islamic extremists from multiple groups and perpetrated heinous human rights abuses against civilians with the goal to spread Sharia law throughout West Africa. Declaring an R2P situation, the combined efforts of the UN, ECOWAS, the French government, and civil society organizations contributed heavily toward subduing the conflict; regrettably, this did not end the conflict. Terrorist attacks continue, and ethnic grudges worsen as IDPs refuse to return home for fear of retribution (Green 2014, 8).

R2P situations are most notable when the world community must respond with military action, but the majority of R2P situations can and should be prevented. The UN addresses R2P situations on a case by case basis (UN General Assembly 2005, 30), and the argument to violate a state's sovereignty by claiming it is failing to prevent genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, or crimes against humanity is a difficult one to make before the tragedy becomes unavoidable. The U.S. military has a permanent command,

AFRICOM, which works through organizations such as ECOWAS to conduct peace operations in concert with the African Union (AU) and the UN. While the current focus of AFRICOM's operations is security force assistance (SFA), the U.S. military's responsibility to protect the civilians in a West African state that cannot do it for themselves still exists. Actions supporting this responsibility should be executed using diplomacy and with the consent of the state in order to preclude future military action.

Table 2. Responsibility to Protect Situations in West Africa			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
1) Are there any situations that warrant a responsibility to protect (R2P) the people in of West Africa?			X

Source: Developed by author.

Step 3: U.S. Moral Obligation to Provide Aid

Given the subjectivity of morality no person could consider any answer to the secondary research question, "Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?" conclusively true. The U.S. believes in helping those who cannot help themselves. Domestically, the U.S. government has welfare programs, assistance for unemployed citizens, and mandates for public spaces and businesses to be accessible to people with disabilities. Internationally, the U.S. provides disaster relief to an average of 50 countries each year (USAID 2017) to

include food drops to areas in need (including the adversarial Democratic People's Republic of Korea), and holds itself up to the world as an example of moral righteousness. The U.S. has also historically placed value on self-improvement, with the responsibility of every person's future resting with every individual, the notion of "pulling oneself up by their bootstraps."

These ideals seem antithetical to each other on their face, confusing the issue of U.S. moral obligation to provide substantial humanitarian assistance and aid to states that cannot provide it to their citizens themselves. An examination of the ethical triangle (figure 1) can help in understanding the philosophies governing the conversation about America's moral obligation to the rest of the world. This examination will focus on the ethics of humanitarian assistance through the three approaches to ethical reasoning, principles-based, consequences-based, and virtues-based reasoning.

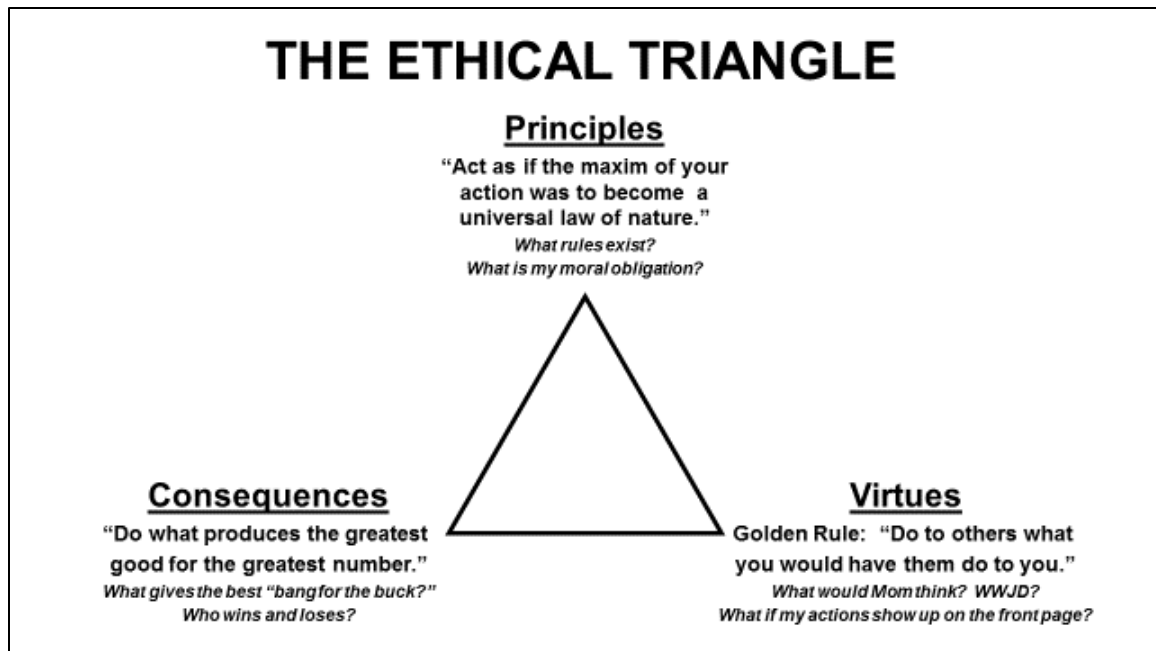


Figure 1. The Ethical Triangle

Source: Jack D. Kem, “Ethical Decision Making: Using the ‘Ethical Triangle,’” Lecture Readings, L102, *Ethical Dimensions of Organizational Leadership* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2016), 4.

Principles-based ethics determine the morality of a situation by examining existing rules that would have some impact on the circumstances. These rules form the core of civilization, emphasizing the need for cooperation between people for a society to exist in continuity. For instance, knowing nothing of standard societal practices, a child will learn that stealing is wrong because a teacher, parent, or other authority figure will establish a rule that forbids such action. Using a principles-based ethics perspective, the U.S. has laws governing the ethical treatment of human beings. While the U.S. has influence in forming international opinions and laws, Americans are not the world’s deciding body determining the rules governing human rights or the morality of other states’ decisions. Understanding the will of the American public is important in

determining the validity of a specifically American moral obligation to support humanitarian assistance. Because of this necessity, the examination of pertinent rules will focus on domestic policy. Expanding upon these core principles, U.S. law places special protections on specific groups of people. In the case of immigrants, there are laws that protect refugees and those seeking asylum, battered spouses and children, victims of human trafficking, victims of female genital mutilation or cutting, and other negatively affected groups (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2017). These types of laws show that the U.S. has placed importance on the notion of compassion and charity by protecting the members of society that need it most.

As former U.S. President and Nobel Peace Prize winner James Carter once said: “The measure of a society is found in how they treat their weakest and most helpless citizens. As Americans, we are blessed with circumstances that protect our human rights and our religious freedom, but for many people around the world, deprivation and persecution have become a way of life.” President Carter and many other U.S. presidents and lawmakers have passed legislation protecting the unrepresented members of society. In September 2016, President Barack Obama authorized the state department to admit up to 110,000 refugees for humanitarian reasons (Obama 2016, 1). As representatives of the U.S. population, these types of rules demonstrate the will of the U.S. citizenry, whose intentions are guided by their collective virtues.

From an American culture standpoint, the virtues involved with humanitarian assistance are clearly aligned toward providing aid whenever possible. As Kem explains, “virtue based ethics should be easy to understand because it appeals to our innate sense of what is right and wrong” (Kem 2016, 2). The virtues of justice, charity, benevolence, and

conscientiousness all support the admirable action of coming to the aid of the defenseless, and only non-moral virtues such as endurance and patience can support inaction in the face of oppression. Additionally, the golden rule of treating others in the manner you wish to be treated (another way of understanding virtue based ethics) would favor assistance over inaction. As a world power, responsibility for exercising these virtues outside U.S. borders becomes an American obligation, demonstrating moral righteousness and influencing other states to emulate and befriend her.

The most contentious ethical battleground rests with consequences-based ethics. This asks the question of the worth of an action. Hedonism (a measure of pleasure produced compared to pain produced) and utilitarianism (a measure of net total good compared to net total bad) are systems we typically use to qualify consequences to evaluate the morality of an act (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2017). There does not exist a consensus on the correct system to measure the consequences of an action, making it difficult to declare an act good or bad with any conclusiveness. This is not consequences-based reasoning's greatest challenge, however. While laws guide people based on higher judgment, be it governmental or deific, and while virtues guide us based on our own experiences, consequences force us to look forward and guess what reactions our actions will bring. According to Shelly Kagan, "it will never be possible to say for sure that any given act was right or wrong, since any event can have further unseen effects down through history" (Kagan 1998, 64).

It is not a difficult thing to guess the immediate consequences of the U.S. providing humanitarian assistance in any situation. The assisted people will likely have a better quality of life, and relations between Americans and the assisted people will likely

improve. With such a low bar, it becomes difficult to argue against providing assistance. The difficulty comes from predicting second and third order effects and managing resources. Equally daunting is attempting to predict the consequences of inaction, especially in an R2P situation that would require humanitarian intervention. Despite this, the immediate effects of action can be very persuasive, especially if a risk estimate is low, and the danger of inaction is always high. John Janzekovic provides an explanation of not only U.S. moral obligation, but worldwide responsibility:

Other belligerents may be encouraged by the international community not acting effectively and by the lack of all-round accountability. The international community and belligerents are both morally accountable for the existence of severe human rights abuse: the international community for failing to act to stop atrocities, and belligerents for carrying out atrocities in the first place. It is not enough to simply blame belligerents for atrocities. We are all to blame for not responding directly and effectively to stop such activities. (Janzekovic 2013, 32)

Humanitarianism is most closely related to consequentialism. This is because humanity's welfare is the sole concern of humanitarianism, and should be the only consequence one should consider when determining the morality of actions. Didier Fassin explains how our shared human condition (mankind) and our relationships with each other as we inevitably draw closer to one another (humaneness) become a mandate to exercise humanitarian strength: "The first dimension (mankind) forms the basis for a demand for rights and an expectation of universality; the second (humaneness) creates the obligation to provide assistance and attention to others" (Fassin 2011, 2).

U.S. leaders and strategists at the national level will decide if a situation exists in West Africa that requires humanitarian assistance or meets the R2P's criteria for intervention. They arrive at that decision through careful consideration of every variable affecting the situation. They have already made it clear through strategy development

documents that human rights advancement in West Africa is a priority, but it is one of many priorities for the region, falling under many other defense-focused efforts. These leaders undoubtedly have an obligation to conduct this analysis, and depending on the results, either two or all three points of the ethical triangle could point to the moral righteousness of such activity. In these cases, the U.S. has the power to take action, and has a philosophically-driven moral obligation to do so in order to maintain a status and reputation of being morally upright.

Table 3. U.S. Moral Obligation in West Africa			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
2) Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?			X

Source: Developed by author.

Step 4: The Validity of a Strategy of Humanitarian Assistance

Strategists must make a deliberate effort to examine a situation thoroughly and develop a plan that meets certain codified criteria. These criteria are suitability, feasibility, and acceptability (Yarger 2012, 47-50). Regardless of time, place, level of responsibility, or field of expertise, people have a general method for determining what they should do in any given situation. They ask themselves what needs to be done to resolve the situation (suitability), then they ask themselves if they have the ability to

perform whatever action they envisioned (feasibility), and finally they decide if the action's cost is worth the benefit it generates (acceptability). This process typically takes place subconsciously for most people on a daily basis. One important distinction to make is with risk, which is part of the ends, ways, means construct (Kem 2012, 27). While acceptability denotes the estimated cost of taking a certain action, risk denotes the unseen potential for negative effects. For example, this is the difference between the monetary cost of a snack from a vending machine (acceptability) and the possibility of the machine rejecting a wrinkled bill (risk). A mitigation of this risk would be to smooth the bill out to increase the likelihood of acceptance (lowered risk) with no change to the cost of the snack (acceptability). However, risk can definitely affect the acceptability if mitigation fails. In our example, if the vending machine refuses the bill, the snack could be acquired at a local store with the additional (and possibly unacceptable) cost of travel. If a strategy meets the standards of these criteria: suitability, feasibility, acceptability, and accounts for risk, then the strategy is valid. Given the current operational environment in West Africa, a strategy with additional emphasis on humanitarian assistance must meet these criteria as well.

Operational Environment

The primary focus of the U.S. military has always been and will always be focused on the defense of U.S. interests at home and abroad. However, the military is a malleable force, tailorable to different situations that may not include direct engagement with an adversarial force. With a greater emphasis on humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa, the use of the military instrument of national power would be useful in supporting the strengthening and expansion of the other three instruments of

power (diplomatic, informational, and economic). This support structure aligns with the NMS's stated goal of employing an integrated military strategy (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2015, 5). AFRICOM's strategic objectives are to "strengthen democratic institutions, spur economic growth, trade, and investment, advance peace and security, and promote opportunity and development throughout Africa" (Rodriguez 2016, 2). These support an end state defined by AFRICOM commander, General (GEN) David Rodriguez, as making African nations "strong, stable, and reliable strategic partners in the future, a future in which Africa will play an increasingly prominent global role" (Rodriguez 2016, 20). In West Africa, GEN Rodriguez described the current problem set as a combination of the Violent Extremist Organization (VEO) Boko Haram, government corruption, citizen disenfranchisement, and criminal organizations disrupting economic development (Rodriguez 2016, 8-10).

Suitability

The analysis of the situations in West Africa showed that there do exist areas that constitute an R2P for the state in which the situation is occurring, and a potential for an R2P intervention from the international community. The root of the majority of these situations is ineffectual or corrupt governance. This has led to the particular problem of high unemployment, causing the exploding youth population to seek opportunity elsewhere, frequently leading to VEOs like Boko Haram (Ighobor 2013). This type of state leadership has also consistently led to human rights abuses throughout West Africa. A strategy of combating human rights violations and enabling westernization of social values and structures, combined with other organizations' efforts to reduce unemployment through government growth, will substantially reduce Boko Haram's

recruitment pool. This will also reduce the need for additional security force assistance programs. Military expenditure of additional resources in support of Department of State (DoS) and USAID programs, the kind that grow good governance and address social issues, will contribute to solving this problem. One such program is the Security Governance Initiative (SGI). This program maintains important security force assistance programs with partnered nations while placing great importance on building democratic systems, processes, and institutions whose capacity meets the needs of their citizenry (USAID 2017). While expertise in the latter is the dominion of the DoS and USAID, the military has an opportunity to facilitate the governmental development through expertise and assistance in infrastructure development, health services, and education (Anderson 2014, 103-104). With a larger number of people and significant resources, the military is much better suited to conduct a continuing mission of social change starting at the ground level (Burger 2015, 83). Aside from the first order effect that humanitarian assistance has on the recipient, there are additional benefits that the U.S. will reap from a sustained effort to support human rights and social change in the region. West African citizens, employed and engaged with their governments due to U.S. military support of security governance initiative (SGI) programs, will not turn to criminal organizations or VEOs for an income; West African Soldiers, effectively combating Boko Haram will minimize their effectiveness and provide security for citizens; West Africa will be invaluable to the U.S. in delegitimizing VEOs, combating piracy and transnational crime, and conducting global politics. For these reasons, a strategy that increases the emphasis on humanitarian assistance is a suitable strategy to achieve AFRICOM and national strategic objectives.

Feasibility

AFRICOM is a gigantic combatant command geographically, but a miniscule one in terms of manpower. It maintains a personnel strength of about 2,000, 1,500 of which operate from Stuttgart, Germany, and most of the rest from other posts outside of continental Africa (AFRICOM 2017a). There are no permanent postings within West Africa with a significant amount of personnel, and priorities in other parts of Africa will decrease the amount of available manpower for operations significantly. Almost all personnel for exercises and security cooperation programs comes from military mobile training teams (MTT), Soldiers from state partnership programs, and interagency partners (AFRICOM 2017b). This lack of personnel could represent a major drawback if unmitigated, as humanitarian assistance, unlike exercises and security cooperation, does not require multiple discrete engagements but a consistent presence. This presence builds personal trust with leaders at all levels, and strives to maintain public visibility as a benign force for good. Without a significantly larger workforce and permanent basing for them, this strategy can become ineffective on a large scale and logistically prohibitive. AFRICOM can mitigate this shortfall, however, through the currently favored tactic of leveraging interagency partners and National Guard service members via the state partnership programs. Coordination and support of NGOs that align with U.S. goals will also mitigate the personnel shortfall. The feasibility of this strategy is its weakest aspect, but with mitigation, meets the standard for validity.

Acceptability

The most effective way of measuring the cost of this strategy is time. Military personnel will participate in fewer bilateral and combined exercises with West African

Nations, reducing the amount of military to military engagement time. This time is important because it directly addresses the military's most important modern objectives of building international capacity to prevent conflict and combating terrorism (White House Staff 2016, 9-11). This lost time is acceptable because while this strategy will initially slow West African nations' progress in their ability to combat terrorism, it will also significantly reduce VEO's ability to influence the region. This strategy will accomplish this mainly by increasing quality of life through education, job creation, and food insecurity through logistical and manpower support of programs like the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) (NEPAD Secretariat 2013, 12) and Peace through Development II (PDEVII) (Clemens-Hope 2015, 12-15) that focus on these themes. Time is also a key factor in determining whether or not the strategy's efforts meet their measures of effectiveness (MoE), as a focus on humanitarian efforts and social change is a long-term effort and prevention efforts require an estimation of future events. The cost of implementing this strategy is high, and contributes to the risk of pursuing it, but the U.S. is absolutely capable of accepting it.

Table 4. Humanitarian Assistance Strategy Validity			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
3) Is a US strategy of providing humanitarian assistance and promoting social change in the region valid?		X	

Source: Developed by author.

Step 5: Providing Effective Assistance

A strategy of providing greater emphasis on humanitarian assistance and social change in West Africa would be suitable in that it will accomplish the objective of decreasing suffering and increasing American influence. While the U.S. military may have the economic power and the resident expertise to support certain humanitarian assistance operations, planners must have a logical way to direct these resources toward this common purpose. They must also have a way to determine the effectiveness of the chosen strategy. In order to accomplish these goals, strategists will use the concept of lines of effort (LOE), measures of effectiveness (MOE), and measures of performance (MOP).

According to JP 5-0, Joint Operation Planning, an LOE links multiple tasks and missions using the logic of purpose - cause and effect - to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions (Joint Staff 2011, III-28). Humanitarian assistance tasks and missions align with this construct. For example, one LOE of this strategy would be education, while another would be economic development (table 5). JP 5-0 also explains MOEs and MOPs. MOEs are criteria that assess changes in systems that are tied to measuring the attainment of an end state or an effect, while MOPs are criteria used to assess friendly actions that is tied to measuring task accomplishment. It measures the relevance of actions being performed (Joint Staff 2011, III-45). Tying these concepts together with an example, an LOE of living a healthy lifestyle could have a MOP of eating higher portions of vegetables (friendly action) with an MOE of having more energy (a measurable change in the system, in this case the body). This “crosswalk” of these concepts is “an inexact science,” but provides strategists with “a tool to determine

success or failure along each of the lines of effort—and insight for the commander to consider prioritization of assets” (Kem 2012, 275). The “End state–MOE / MOP crosswalk” tool in table 5 will assist with identifying the level of effectiveness the U.S. military could use to measure their effectiveness.

Table 5. End state–MOP / MOE Crosswalk			
LOE	Conditions	MOEs	MOPs
Health issue prevention/ treatment	West African clinics and hospitals accessible	% population within reasonable distance of facility % drop in treatment of preventable illness	# facilities built # iterations of medical training programs complete
Education	State-funded schools teach reasonable curriculum to all citizens	% Literacy rate % school age children enrolled in school Increased tolerance	# facilities built # teachers employed # outreach programs instituted
Access to Food	No L3 or L2 food crises in West Africa exist	% increase in food production % decrease in malnutrition	# food production projects completed # farmers trained
Effective Governance (Applies to all, but focused on Cote d’Ivoire / Guinea)	Functional, self-sustaining and legitimate gov’t Population confident in gov’t protection	# Fair elections conducted % IDPs / Refugees returning home # human rights protections enacted	# key leader engagements (peace councils) # key leader engagements (gov’t reform)
VEO deterrence and response	VEO activity neutralized	# VEO attacks # VEO members returning home	# TSCPs ongoing # exercises conducted

Source: Developed by author.

These LOEs address AFRICOM strategic objectives in West Africa. The LOEs working in concert should help address a fifth major concern, endemic poverty, by creating jobs in various sectors of the economy. The biggest problem that humanitarian

assistance and social change alone will not solve is that of violence perpetrated by VEOs like Boko Haram. In this area, the reduced, but competent, theater security cooperation programs (TSCP) and security force assistance exercises and programs will be important in training West African security forces how to respond to terror attacks. These LOEs also raise significant issues dealing with how the U.S. will approach them from a resourcing perspective and interorganizational relationship perspective.

When determining the potential impact of humanitarian operations in West Africa, the U.S. military has the responsibility to consider more than just their funding, logistical capability, and breadth of expertise to assist in such operations. They must also consider the ability of a West African state or NGOs operating within the state to consolidate gains made by military effort and build upon them indefinitely. This is a concern because while the U.S. has a history of being extremely generous in terms of providing aid internationally, the U.S. also does not typically commit to medium- or long-term projects involving humanitarian aid. In 2014, the U.S. gave just over \$2 billion to the World Food Programme to fight hunger, but only 2 percent of that was as part of an enduring multi-year effort (World Food Programme 2015, 2). This is important because while situations requiring humanitarian assistance can occur suddenly and require rapid response, the immediate reaction rarely provides lasting relief to civilians in the affected area.

According to Global Humanitarian Assistance, many types of natural hazards requiring a coordinated response occur on a cyclical basis, and conflict in a region can create situations requiring humanitarian assistance for up to 20 years (Global Humanitarian Assistance 2016, 63). Long-term commitment to the proposed LOEs will

enhance the effectiveness of the strategy by providing a “predictable flow of resources over longer timeframes and . . . facilitating more cost-efficient and effective ways of working” (Global Humanitarian Assistance 2016, 64). These humanitarian assistance measures and social changes will absolutely require long term commitment to reach the kind of systemic shift envisioned in the MOEs in table 5. That in turn requires strategists to consider resource allocations at the COCOM level and program them years in advance, complicating reconciliation with AFRICOM’s yearly budget, which is heavily influenced by strategy at the national level.

These LOEs will also depend heavily upon interagency cooperation. This is already a directive from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: “(During the planning process) planners are informed by the Department of State’s (DOS’s) Joint Regional Strategy . . . and, if applicable, the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID’s) strategy” (Dempsey 2014, A-4). Working closely with other government agencies presents a unique set of challenges, chief among them a friction between civilian and military personalities and authority structures, especially when a habitual relationship does not exist (Joint Staff 2016, I-13). While AFRICOM is practiced in working with interorganizational partners at the theater level, this cooperation must extend through all levels of operations. Because the expertise in establishing the MOP programs that will be necessary to reach the proposed MOEs are mostly resident within interagency partners, U.S. military members must be prepared to assume an enduring supporting role. If the army can commit to a multi-year humanitarian assistance effort and effectively work alongside civilian government and non-governmental organizations, effective gains as measured by the MOPs and MOEs along the proposed LOEs are very achievable.

Table 6. Meaningful Assistance to West Africa			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
4) Can the US effectively provide meaningful assistance to West African groups in need of it?		X	

Source: Developed by author.

Step 6: For Better or Worse

COA Comparison explanation (same evaluation criteria based on AFRICOM objectives. In order to support the idea of a humanitarian assistance and social change focused strategy in West Africa, such a strategy must be more effective than the current strategy focused on SFA and security cooperation in terms of accomplishing AFRICOM's strategic objectives. In order to determine if pursuing this modified strategy would be better or worse for accomplishing these objectives, the two strategies must be compared.

AFRICOM's current strategy in West Africa mainly emphasizes security cooperation and military engagements, and is a suitable strategy to achieve AFRICOM's stated objectives. One of the five command-sponsored exercises that involve several, if not mostly West African countries is *Flintlock*. This exercise "is designed to foster regional cooperation to enable our African partners to stabilize regions of North and West Africa, while reducing sanctuary and support for violent extremist organizations (VEOs) . . . (it) provides increased interoperability, counterterrorism, and combat skills training

while creating a venue for regional engagement among partner nations” (AFRICOM 2017b). This language is common in the description of four of the five missions, with *United Accord* being an exception that includes exercising humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) response on top of the common SFA focus. The inter-state interaction that all of these programs and exercises generate is invaluable in creating not only a competent defense force, but also creating a sense of camaraderie between service members and bonds between governments. This heavily supports accomplishment of the “VEO deterrence and response” LOE, but nothing else. The point of shifting emphasis away from a strong military relationship to a strong civil-military relationship is to “win big,” to accomplish AFRICOM strategic objectives with a high degree of effectiveness. As addressed in step 4, this big win may come at the expense of time taken to complete them, but will eventually yield higher measures of effectiveness along the LOEs defined there. It would be defined by a decrease in the gains along the “VEO deterrence and response” LOE, but would increase gains along all other LOEs in compensation.

This is not to say that there does not exist a focus on humanitarian assistance in AFRICOM theater strategy, only that it should be magnified. AFRICOM supports programs such West Africa Disaster Preparedness Initiative (WADPI), but only at arm’s length, facilitating funding from U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid Appropriation (ODHACA). Other humanitarian assistance projects are much more likely to fail due to field team or AFRICOM deferment. Table 7 provides Overseas Humanitarian Assistance Shared Information System (OHASIS) information on these projects. According to OHASIS, about 72 percent of AFRICOM’s projects fall into inactivity indefinitely. The remaining 28

percent of projects are in some stage of completion, but since 2012 AFRICOM has completed only 48 out of 508 projects, or 12 percent. This low number is reflective of the low emphasis on the LOEs not involved with security force assistance and security cooperation, with slow growth in those areas being the result.

Table 7. AFRICOM Humanitarian Assistance Project Statuses 2012-2017							
Country Name	# Projects	Pre-Nomination	Nomination	Approved	Execution	Completed	Inactive
Benin	59	1	9	0	15	1	33
Burkina Faso	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
Cape Verde	6	0	0	0	1	0	5
Cote d'Ivoire	66	0	0	0	15	0	51
Gambia	8	0	0	0	0	2	6
Ghana	53	5	11	0	1	8	28
Guinea	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Guinea-Bissau	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Liberia	15	0	0	0	0	4	11
Mali	19	0	0	1	0	1	17
Niger	93	12	2	1	0	0	78
Nigeria	39	3	0	3	2	6	25
Senegal	27	0	2	0	0	13	12
Sierra Leone	10	0	0	0	4	0	6
Togo	101	9	10	0	13	12	57
Total	508	30	34	5	51	48	340

Source: Developed by author; data from OHASIS Project Mapper.

The lack of emphasis on humanitarian assistance activities does not negate AFRICOM's chosen strategy. The command is doing work that has a positive impact, but there are dangers associated with it. Maya Kandel believes that the two types of strategies are at odds, saying "the emphasis on the security priority is the possible contradiction with governance and development objectives, which are essential long-term objectives as they are meant to set the conditions for the fight against the causes of terrorism" (Kandel 2015, 21). A shift in focus toward humanitarian assistance and social change would require long-term commitment, but would address those causes, and be far more effective at mitigating them than the current model.

The need for West African reform in human rights abuses is undisputed, but one compelling argument in favor of the current strategy is that no further reform can happen until the people have a sense of security, which can only come from the strength of a state's security forces. Alexandre Marc, Neelam Verjee, and Stephen Mogaka make the case that "reform of the security sector has not been accorded sufficient centrality in the process, which could threaten its long-term viability," and argue that security threats in West Africa are a result of weak national armies and their requirement for external help (Marc, Verjee, and Mogaka 2015, 131-133). If this is the case, then deterring and defeating VEOs is rightfully the most important LOE in accomplishing AFRICOM's strategic objectives. While this consideration is indeed important, the security concerns in West Africa are, with few exceptions, not linked to governmental misconduct that would diminish the effectiveness of their fighting force. Most threats to the region, as discussed in step 2, are in the recovery or prevention phase. This means that with lessened SFA activities, the state governments should still be able to effectively defend themselves

from external threats, such as criminal organizations, pirates and VEOs. Accepting risk in this area becomes prudent when considering the host nations' achievements. It allows for increasing focus on programs that advance the goal of eliminating the root causes of instability in the region.

It is undeniable that West Africa benefits from a robust AFRICOM strategy focused on security force assistance and cooperation programs. In conjunction with the limited humanitarian assistance supporting operations AFRICOM conducts, the COCOM will attain its strategic objectives. However, shifting focus toward working with other organizations on humanitarian assistance and social change efforts would build on these gains. The addition of humanitarian assistance projects would create jobs and infrastructure that supports all LOEs, while sustaining and improving a lasting partnership in the process.

Table 8. A Better or Worse Strategy			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
5) How effective will maintaining the current model be in achieving national strategic objectives compared to humanitarian assistance and social change?			X

Source: Developed by author.

Step 7: Aggregation

The last step is to aggregate the findings from the previous steps and determine an answer to the primary research question:

Table 9. Scored Response Evaluation Criteria			
Question	No (1 point)	Yes: Some More Emphasis (2 points)	Yes: Much More Emphasis (3 points)
1) Are there any situations that warrant a responsibility to protect (R2P) the people in of West Africa?			X
2) Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian assistance and promote social change in West Africa?			X
3) Is a US strategy of providing humanitarian assistance and promoting social change in the region valid?		X	
4) How can the US effectively provide meaningful assistance to West African groups in need of it?		X	
5) How effective will maintaining the current model be in achieving national strategic objectives compared to humanitarian assistance and social change?			X
Total	0	6	9

Source: Developed by author.

The aggregated score shows that the answer to the primary research question is yes. AFRICOM theater strategy should place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change in order to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society and increase American influence in the region. The most significant consideration in implementing this emphasis is accepting risk in terms of the necessary time to fulfill AFRICOM strategic objectives and U.S. military willingness to work with, and in some cases, subordinate themselves to interorganizational partners.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter used a step-wise approach to present relevant data pertaining to each secondary research question, then analyzed that information to answer and aggregated the scores of those questions to determine an answer to the primary research question. The next chapter, chapter 5, will present final conclusions and offer recommendations for future research into this topic.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I saw that throughout my trip to Africa last year. American assistance has made possible the prospect of an AIDS-free generation, while helping Africans care for their sick. We are helping farmers get their products to market, and feeding populations once endangered by famine. We aim to double access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa, so people are connected to the promise of the global economy.

— Barack Obama, Speech to West Point cadets

Chapter Introduction

As this analysis has shown, the answer to the primary research question “Should the AFRICOM theater strategy place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society, and increase American influence in the region?” is yes. This chapter will provide a discussion of the conclusions that research into this topic generated. The Recommendations will follow the discussion, first to decision-makers who influence strategic policy in West Africa, and second to future researchers investigating the subject of alternative strategies in the region.

Conclusions

Although the answer to the primary research question is yes, AFRICOM theater strategy should place more emphasis on West African humanitarian assistance and social change in order to decrease suffering, improve quality of life for all members of society and increase American influence in the region; there are several things to consider about the effects of this change. The literature review has shown that there are differing

opinions on the best use of military assets in West Africa. Some believe Africa as a whole is over reliant on foreign aid and would see assistance scaled down heavily to encourage self-sufficiency, while others would advocate a shift in resources to other aid-providing institutions that have more expertise in development than defense. With many options available to the AFRICOM strategists, analysis of the most pertinent variables affecting the decision must yield the answer that a greater emphasis on humanitarian assistance is the proper way forward. VEOs that threaten West Africa also threaten the U.S., meaning that it is in both West Africa and America's interest that security be strong in the region. For this reason, there is no possibility of eliminating SFA and security cooperation activities. Even when the threat eventually subsides, a positive military relationship with West African states is in the U.S.'s best interest. Former President Barack Obama highlighted the importance of security against threats like those West Africa currently faces in a speech to the graduating class of West Point in 2014, dedicating \$5 billion to fight said threats (Traywick 2014). Multilateral and combined exercises and operations will never, and should never be excised from a military strategy.

That said, the proper application of U.S. resources to operations is a responsibility of the AFRICOM commander. The analysis of R2P situations in West Africa helps with this, showing that there are problems in West Africa that the military cannot solve through SFA exercises and security cooperation alone. These situations require the expertise of other agencies that cannot execute a robust development operation without the logistical support of the U.S. military. This situation forces a symbiotic relationship that neither organization is completely comfortable with, but must master for the benefit

of the mission and missions like it that America will be inevitably called upon to execute at some point in the future.

Recommendations

Recommendations to decision makers: Strategists are just people. While commanders encourage creative thinking and using resources wisely, it requires diligence to ensure that planners are not stuck in a single mode of thinking. Without guidance and encouragement to do differently, people will generally think in the manner they are accustomed to thinking. This means that a Soldier in a military COCOM may not immediately see the benefits of a plan that does not involve military service members performing their traditional functions. This single-mindedness should be discouraged. Additionally, there is a tendency toward making objectives that are attainable within a matter of months or a year. The strategy of emphasizing humanitarian assistance and social change will require multiple years to succeed, multiple years of cooperation, and in some operations, subordination of military service members to civilian interagency partners. Because of this, it is important to consider these factors when choosing one strategy over another.

Recommendations to future researchers: should any future researchers decide to study humanitarian assistance and social change as part of U.S. strategy affecting West Africa, there are some areas of research that deserve a closer look in terms of their effect on a decision to pursue that type of strategy. West Africa is comprised of many countries. Each country has its own rich history, distinct culture, languages and political issues. With the exception of taking a closer look at unique R2P situations in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire, the breadth and depth of each country's uniqueness in West Africa were largely

covered by a blanket humanitarian assistance plan. Some places need more assistance than others; however, and a nuanced approach to researching these assistance projects could be extremely useful in determining resource allocation, or even strategy validity. For example, Benin has a one percent completion rate of humanitarian assistance projects, while Senegal has a completion rate of nearly 50 percent (OHASIS 2017). Analysis of these differences between each country should identify significant factors that could improve strategy development.

A second area of research that could significantly impact the implementation of any strategy in West Africa is the interference of other powers foreign to Africa in West African affairs. Of note, China has a large humanitarian assistance program. According to researchers at the European Parliament, 85 percent of its \$53.7 million in foreign humanitarian aid went to West Africa (Grieger 2016, 2). This additional element has the potential to disrupt partnerships and influence allies in ways not beneficial to the U.S. Future research in this topic would benefit from an examination of these types of foreign aid and their effect on U.S. to West African relationships.

Parting Thoughts

The U.S. military is a versatile entity with a mission to fight and win the nation's wars. When that enemy is poverty, hunger, or illiteracy that drives youths to join VEOs, U.S. military forces must adapt to the new mission set and carry out a plan. The long-term plan to fight these enemies must heavily incorporate humanitarian assistance and social change at the lowest levels to be successful.

. . . we should not expect change to happen overnight. That's why we form alliances—not only with governments, but with ordinary people.

— Barack Obama

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